



Volume: 04 Issue: 03 | 2023 ISSN: 2660-454X

<https://cajitmfc.centralasianstudies.org>

The Role of Educational Institutions in Sustainable Tourism Development in Rwanda

¹ Alphonse Habimana

² Prof. Dr. Ricardo Saaverdra

³ Prof. Vince Sinining

Received 06th Feb 2023,

Accepted 19th Mar 2023,

Online 27th Mar 2023

¹ Universidad Azteca University, Department of Hospitality Management

² Director and Chair International Programs Azteca University

³ Researcher and Lecturer at University of Technology and Arts of Byumba (UTAB)

Abstract: Tourism is the fastest growing industry in the world, and its environmental impacts are so great that the achievement of sustainable tourism would seem to integral to the achievement of sustainable development. Tourism impacts are wide-ranging, are perceived differently by different interest groups, and are subject to extensive uncertainty. However, there appears to be widespread agreement that education has, at the very least, an important role to play in the achievement of sustainable tourism.

The tourism industry is a significant driver of the global economy and impacts societies all over the world that are currently experiencing radical change. Responding to these changes requires economic paradigms and educational systems based on new foundations. It has received a remarkable reputation worldwide, and education tourism is a growing segment of tourism development.

According to the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), tourism has become one of the fastest growing industries in the world. The grandeur of the hospitality and tourism industry, along with globalization, advancements in technology and climate change has impacted on needs to travel, live and work in sustainable ways. This places an increasing demand on the tourism industry to act accountably in the practice of social, economic and environmental sustainability. With the adoption of the United Nations Agenda 2030 for sustainable development, sustainability has become a primary global focus with sustainable development goals and associated targets (SDGs). This shift has also impacted on tourism education. There is little research, however, in secondary tourism education and the presence of sustainability in the curriculum. Previous research has established that teachers, students, and other stakeholders consider sustainable development (SD) in tourism education as important. Nonetheless, there is a gap and a lack of research on the presence of SD in tourism and technical and vocational education and training (TVET) across national borders and at upper secondary tourism education levels.

Rwanda as a small but growing market, with a population of nearly 13 million people and a Gross Domestic Product (GDP, Current) of \$10.354 billion, according to the World Bank. Leading sectors include energy, agriculture, trade and hospitality, and financial services. Rwanda's economy is

overwhelmingly rural and heavily dependent on agriculture. Strong growth in the services sector over the past decade, particularly in construction and tourism, has contributed to overall economic growth. GNI per capita was \$830 in 2019, according to the World Bank. The government is seeking to turn Rwanda into a regional trade, logistics, and conference hub. Pillars of this strategy include the construction of several new international business class hotels, a convention center in downtown Kigali, a new inland container terminal and bonded warehouse in Kigali. The government has also invested in expanding the fleet for the national carrier RwandAir and is pursuing U.S. authorization for a direct flight from Kigali to the United States. Construction of the new Bugesera International Airport is ongoing. In 2007, Rwanda joined the East African Community (EAC). Rwanda is also a member of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA). Rwanda has signed and ratified agreements on the movement of goods and services within the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). Rwanda is the only nation in the region to have concluded a Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) with the United States. Rwanda has also concluded a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) with the United States. The most recent meeting on the TIFA was in October 2019. In 2009, Rwanda became a member of the Commonwealth and hosted the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in June 2022, after postponements in 2020 and 2021 due to COVID-19, Rwanda joined the OECD Development Center in 2019. Rwanda is a member of the Northern Corridor initiative, which includes Kenya, Uganda, South Sudan, and Ethiopia as core members and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Burundi, and Tanzania as observers. Rwanda is also at the forefront of the Central Corridor initiative, which also includes Burundi, DRC, Tanzania, and Uganda. The large infrastructure projects (such as rail transportation) envisioned under these initiatives could help to reduce the cost of conducting business and transporting goods across the region.

Rwanda has shown commitment to bring improvements to its education sector. The development of Human capital that involves the enhancement of the education and health sectors was one of the main pillars of Rwanda's development programme launched in 2000 to transform the country into a middle income state driven by the knowledge economy by 2020. Many developed countries joined in to financially support Rwanda to fulfil its development ambitions. Considering the history, there is some progress where education institutions have some contribution through different ways of curriculum development, training and capacity building. This calls for current research of an international and comparative kind, in order to deepen the knowledge in the field there is a need for a more holistic approach to SD in the tourism curricula. This study attempts to explore the drivers of education tourism as the tool for sustainable tourism development to fulfill the existing research gap in the field of education tourism.

Key words: Sustainable Development, Sustainable tourism development, Technical Vocational Education and Training, Tourism Education.

INTRODUCTION

According to United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), tourism is not only one of the largest global industries, but it has become one of the fastest growing industries in the world (UNWTO, 2016). The grandeur of the tourism industry, along with globalization, immense rapid technological progress and climate change have impacted needs to travel, live and work in a sustainable way. This impact place an increasing demand on the hospitality and tourism industry to act responsibly in the practice of social, economic and environmental sustainability. Sustainable development (SD) was first introduced to the international community in 1987 by the World Commission on the Environment and Development (WCED) and in 1992 by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCE). The alignment of sustainable development and education gained further attention when the United Nations declared 2005 - 2014 as the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD).

Most recently, in 2015, the United Nations adopted the Agenda 2030 for sustainable development with sustainable development goals and associated targets (SDGs)(UN, 2015). Goal number four is centered on education (UN, 2015). Additionally, there has been a growing interest in the linkage between Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and SD in the last decades. The two concepts were first interspersed at the Second International Congress held in Soul 1999 (UNESCO, 1999). In addition, the potential of TVET has been recognized by various stakeholders to develop human capabilities and individual empowerment along with socio-economic growth (Pavlova, 2009; Tikly, 2013; UNESCO, 1999). The SDGs not only include primary education but also have a specific target focusing on TVET (UN, 2015, 4.4). As a result, TVET has finally been placed in the forefront of the international political agenda. In 2016, 1 of 11 jobs was provided directly, indirectly or induced by the tourism industry. That industry employs 12 million people in Europe alone (Eurostat, 2015; UNWTO, 2016). Furthermore, the tourism industry attracts a young labor force with limited educational experiences (Eurostat, 2015). The disciplinary field of TVET can, therefore, become a potential provider of skills and relevant training in sustainable development to serve the global tourism industry with competent future professionals.

Previous research has established that teachers, students, and other stakeholders consider SD in hospitality and tourism education to be important (Barber, Deale & Goodman, 2011; Boley, 2011; Deale, Nichols & Jacques, 2009). Nonetheless, there is a gap in knowledge and a lack of research on the presence of sustainable development and the extent to which it is explicitly stated in TVET across national borders and at upper secondary tourism education levels.

In 2015, technical, vocational education and training rose to the forefront of the international and political debate with the adoption of UN's Sustainable development knowledge platform and the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable development with its 17 sustainable development goals (UN, 2015). Goal 4 and target 4 in the SDGs proposes that, "by 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship" (UN, 2015, 4.4). In addition, 4 out of 7 targets are directly or indirectly linked to TVET (UN, 2015). This shows the commitment to SD and the recognition of TVET as a significant instrument in the pursuit of individual and global sustainability. It further confirms that TVET can be a powerful, unprecedented global agent potential to change. In addition, 2017 was declared the UNWTO year of tourism. Hence, the potential of tourism and sustainable development was recognized by the United Nations. The message was clear by, at the time, Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon's address at the World Tourism Day 2015:

With more than one billion international tourists now traveling the world each year, tourism has become a powerful and transformative force that is making a genuine difference in the lives of millions of people. The potential of tourism for sustainable development is considerable. As one of the world's leading employment sectors, tourism provides important livelihood opportunities, helping to alleviate poverty and drive inclusive development (UNWTO, 2016).

With increased tourism, it is imperative that the tourism industry practice sustainability. This could start with educating future tourism professionals in the relevant competencies and skills in sustainable tourism in a TVET setting. Also, Pavlova and Huang argue that sustainable knowledge will be an essential skill required by future employers (2013). A study of tourism curricula can have an important role for educational planners to investigate if the presence of sustainability in the curriculum and if it is aligned with the SD framework (UNESCO, 2016). Furthermore, the Education 2030 Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action for the implementation of Sustainable development states that, "curricula are the main way in which knowledge and skills to promote sustainable development and global citizenship are typically conveyed to students" (UNESCO, 2016 p. 161). Moreover, the Incheon Declaration states "further research to subject curricula would aid in understanding progress on target 4.7" (UNESCO,

2016, p. 293). This clearly indicates the important role of the curriculum in SD education. Tourism is highly recognized to be indispensable for human, environmental, and economic development (UNWTO, 2015). However, previous research shows a gap in comparative studies and initial TVET and tourism education.

Tourism is one of the top four export categories for as many as 83 percent of countries and is the main source of foreign exchange earnings, employment creation, and income generation for at least 38 percent of countries (Sharmin, 2016; Alim, Jee, Voon, Ngui, & Kasuma, 1 Professor, Department of Marketing, University of Rajshahi, Bangladesh 2 Post Graduate Research Fellow, Department of Marketing, University of Rajshahi, Bangladesh 3 IBS Research Fellow (M.Phil), Institute of Bangladesh Studies, University of Rajshahi, Bangladesh 4 Associate Professor, Department of Marketing, University of Rajshahi, Bangladesh 5 Associate Professor, Department of Management, Bangobondhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Science and Technology University, Gopalgonj, Bangladesh 6 Professor, Department of Marketing, University of Rajshahi, Bangladesh. (Corresponding Author)

Over the past several decades, travel and tourism have created distinct positions in the world economy (Blanke, 2007; Jee, Ting, & Alim, 2019). Tourism can be a great way of poverty alleviation in developing countries. Sandip (2014) indicates that the development of the service industry will accelerate the economic growth of a country. Roy and Roy (2015) discussed that tourism can bring many economic, social, and environmental benefits, particularly in rural areas.

Global tourism is the world's biggest and fastest growing industry (Filion, Foley, & Jacquemot, 1994). To many governments the expansion of tourism appears to be a very attractive method of achieving economic growth. Potential hard currency earnings for successful host countries are large. The expectation of such earnings is central to the development plans of a number of small states (Cater, 1995), and an important component in the strategies of many larger ones. Other advantageous aspects of tourism growth may include the creation of (often usefully decentralised) employment, enhanced tax revenues, a stimulus to conservation efforts, the attraction of inward foreign investment, and the creation of economic and recreational infrastructure for local use (Alderman, 1994; Pleumarom, 1994).

The creation of jobs, the flow of foreign currency, and economic expansion are all significantly influenced by tourism. Any nation's tourism industry expands based on the availability of facilities for infrastructure; lodging, transportation, and recreation, therefore a variety of stakeholders from the federal and state governments to business owners and the general public play crucial roles in this practice. Education and tourism are inseparable since they complement one another's benefit. Through educational travel, people can learn more about the programmes or goals of their studies as well as the environment, the socioeconomic environment, and the cultural surroundings. The term "educational tourism" denotes the educational travel experiences which are planned and created with a purpose to meet or fulfill educational objectives precisely. Such sightseeing and educational tours enable students and participants to have world class Global (Global & Local) and lifetime learning experiences that greatly enhance their knowledge outside of the classroom. There are elements of fun mixed in with high-quality learning on vacations and in educational travel experiences. Visits to different locations are not only providing an enjoyable experience but also yields significant learning experiences related to the educational goals and learning outcomes. The growing demand for learning new skills and acquiring knowledge from the best places on earth has led to the global establishment of educational tourism as a unique tourism and travel industry. The growing desire and trends of visitors and travelers to visit new places and sites with learning experiences of one kind or another have added appeal for the tourists. (D. Kumar, 2015)

Tourism is not only an economic activity it also includes recreation, education, and experiences (Alim, Roy, & Hossain, 2018). To make the tourists more acquainted with the knowledge of the hidden treasures, education tourism employs a vital role which becomes a means of sustainable tourism

development in a destination. However, the effect of education tourism on the sustainability of the overall tourism industry is an under-researched area. Existing studies hardly examined the issues relating to tourism educational programs, environmental awareness, responsibility, good practice, and promotion of sustainable tourism development. As a result, the negative impacts of tourism development draw people's attention. Although most governments from developing countries are trying to nourish their tourism industry, however, the environmental and economic sustainability in these countries are far-reaching due to the absence of knowledge based tourism development. It is not too late to change the patterns of tourism education and learning for the sustainability of this sector. Thus, this research is an attempt to set out the education tourism adoption as a growth strategy for sustainable tourism development in Rwanda.

Literature Review

Education tourism or edu-tourism refers to the learning experience that is directly related to the tourism destination. Education tourism refers to learning about the eco-system, nature, environment, heritage, culture, and firming through tourism experience (Ankomah & Larson, 2004). Wang and Li (2013) identified that education tours are offered to the reputed schools, institutes, universities, or some historical sites and famous scholars' residences.

It is expected that education tourism enriches participants' r knowledge about the hidden treasures of the tourism destination and upgrades tourists' products through the local tourism industry. In the broader context, Ritchie (2009) defined educational tourism as "Tourist activity is undertaken by those who are undertaking an overnight vacation and those who are undertaking an excursion for whom education and learning is a primary part of their trip."

They assessed the perceptual difference in sustainable management among college students in Estonia, Germany, and Taiwan from the aspects of awareness, responsibility, practice, education, and impacts. Improving the awareness of tourism and tourism education among young generations and schools' student is one of the tactical phenomena (Jaber & Marzuki, 2019).

Education tourism refers to tourists' responsible behavior that has a positive impact on their social and environmental concerns (François-Lecompte & Prim-Allaz 2011). Authors further suggest that the focus on sustainable tourism is obvious mainly through sustainable travels. Sustainable traveling means avoiding environmental deterioration, (i.e., using non-polluting means of transport) as well as getting involved with the host residents for protecting the natural recourses.

Sustainable tourism functions in raising awareness of sustainable development issues, developing cooperation between the stakeholders, and setting up and monitoring the indicators for sustainable development of a country or region. Awareness of climate change, environmental degradation, inequality, species loss, rapid population growth, and depletion has emphasized the need for education tourism for sustainable tourism development (Willy et al., 2015).

Responsibility for education tourism is important to develop sustainable tourism development. It refers to who will take the responsibility to improve the tourism sector. It is unclear whether the responsibility goes to the government, hospitality industry, university, lobby group, community, and myself to improve edu-tourism for tourism sustainability (Willy et al., 2015).

The planned actions did not have a major consequence on the environmental improvement but it has built education on environmental issues including waste reduction activities among the community members (Awang-Kipli, 2006). Education affects tourism development through curriculum, internships, class readings, seminars, awards, and class projects which grow for sustainability (Willy et al., 2015). Education of teaching, curriculum and all other activities aiming for the education of students and others are significant elements of sustainable development for the tourism sector (Felleisen et al., 2018). The role of education in tourism development is to allow people to make significant members of society, able

to realize their full potential for environmental preservation, and with the developed intellect necessary to remedy the great challenges (Wals & Jickling, 2002).

Sustainable practices in the tourism sector become critical agenda for the reduction of the negative impacts on nature, and their better integration into the economic and socio cultural environment of local communities. Tourism is compared to rocket science provoking the importance of sustainable tourism development (Tyrrell & Johnston, 2012). Sustainable tourism development has three potential dimensions such as environmental, social, and economic which significantly impact education tourism (Swarbrooke, 1999).

Educational tourism has been discussed across the regional aspect. For example, some studies (Reisinger & Dimanche, 2010) refer historical development of the tourism industry and establish that educational tourism is a distinct market segment in Britain, America, and Australia. Moreover, the studies covered the issues of the future development of the tourism market and its diversification, which implies that such value as education is going to create a demand for products that encourage learning experiences of tourists from books, guides, videos, educational tourism, cultural tourism, interpretation services, special interest tourism, and food & restaurant tourism (Tuhin et al., 2020).

The study "Beyond Educational Tourism: Lessons Learned While Student Teaching Abroad" by Quezada, R. L. (2004) highlighted various issues that student teachers had to face while teaching abroad, such as adapting to the curriculum, peer contact, language barrier, etc. In addition to mentioning a number of significant difficulties, this study also provided recommendations that schools of education should consider as they prepare and expose aspiring teachers to international student teaching abroad.

According to research by Goyal M. M. (2014) in "Educational Tourism: Analyzing The Global Trends," some of the main concerns for students who want to study abroad include financial resources, immigration regulations, cost of living, and hostel amenities.

Sustainable Development (SD)

"Sustainable development is the overarching paradigm of the United Nations" (UNESCO, 2012a, p. 1). However, sustainable development and sustainability are not always easily and clearly defined in the literature. For instance, what is the difference between sustainability and sustainable development? UNESCO explains, "Sustainability is often thought of as a long term goal (i.e. a more sustainable world), while sustainable development refers to the many processes and pathways to achieve it (e.g. sustainable agriculture and forestry, sustainable production and consumption, good government, research and technology transfer, education and training, etc.)" (UNESCO, 2012 a,p.1). Similarly, Thomas describes, "Sustainability refers to the capacity of people to adapt and cope with their environments as individuals and as a part of social organizations" (2009, p. 77).

"Sustainable development is a more dynamic notion, emphasizing the need for individuals and organizations to actively learn and develop" (Thomas, 2009, p. 77). In this study, both descriptions of sustainable development and sustainability will be used and are sometimes used interchangeably to ease the discussion. Before proceeding with the discussion of SD and TVET in tourism, it is important to review the concept and its development. SD evolved from the many global economic, environmental and social problems in the 1970's and 1980's which spurred the international community to adopt a different approach to development (Boley, 2011). Hence, linking to environment and development, the Brundtland Report was adopted and the concept SD was popularized by former Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland (UN, 1987). In the 1987 World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future, SD is defined as, "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (UN, 1987). Furthermore, at the 1992 United Nations conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro or the Rio Summit, world leaders recognized a shared focus on environmental economic and social SD (UN, 1992).

At the World Summit in New York in 2005, the three dimensions of sustainable development were presented: the economic, social and environmental (UN, 2005). Clearly, the global understanding of sustainable development has developed over the past decades and most recently in 2015, with the adoption of UN's Sustainable development goals (SDGs) and the 2030 agenda for sustainable development (UN, 2015). The SDG's is an expansion of the Millennium Development goals. The MDGs had 8 goals with a focus on the world's poorest (UN, n.d.). The 2030 Agenda unites the global development goals into one framework. The SDGs have 17 goals and 169 associated targets with the ambition of reaching them in 2030, including goal 4 with its focus on education (UN, 2015). In addition, the SDGs have embraced a holistic approach to sustainable development with five interlinked themes of people, planet prosperity, peace and prosperity (UN, 2015). It is also more universal and comprehensive than the MDGs which main educational focus was on primary education in developing countries. The SDGs recognize the global responsibility of combined efforts and the value of all forms of education (UN, 2015).

Furthermore, it links to global citizenship, human rights and intergenerational equity. The expectation is that global justice is extended to include not only this generation but also future generations. Its core value is sustainability, which is embedded in the goals and targets and unites it into one framework (UN, 2015). Education is deeply rooted in the SDGs and encapsulated in goal 4. This study is mainly linked to educational goals access and participation, and TVET, and SD (UN, 2015). There is also a link to goal 8 with its focus on decent work and economic growth (UN, 2015). UNESCO defines decent work as an adequate number of working hours per week and that employees are provided with a written contract to protect the right to guaranteed social benefits (UNESCO, 2016).

However, education is interlinked with many of the other goals and targets in the SDG are as well (UNESCO, 2016). The SDGs draw on the holistic vision of Education for All (EFA) (UNESCO, 2012b; UNESCO, 2016). The 17 SDGs recognize and understand the importance of different levels of education and that education cannot be addressed in isolation from one another (UNESCO, 2016). EFA focused on equal access and basic education, while the SDGs also include higher education, TVET, and adult education. This gives the SDGs a broader content, including global citizenship, skills, and education for sustainable development. Also, the SDGs are more oriented towards outcomes and the quality of education and are more closely aligned with lifelong learning. However, the goals are very ambitious. Similarly, the global education monitoring landscape is rapidly changing which results in an extended scope of the sustainability development agenda (UNESCO, 2016). This study will hopefully facilitate the monitoring of the SDG in education. This study uses the three pillars or dimensions of sustainability as a frame for the tourism curriculum (UN, 2005). It can be described as "sustainability is a paradigm for thinking about a future in which environmental, social and economic considerations are balanced in the pursuit of development and an improved quality of life. These three spheres – society, environment and economy – are intertwined" (UNESCO, 2012a, p. 1).

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)

Education is identified as one of the key agents to achieve sustainability (Pavlova, 2009; UNESCO, 2005; UNESCO, 2014a). This was firmly established in 2002 when the United Nations declared 2005-2014 as the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) to support the role of education towards sustainable development (UNESCO n.d.). Its goals included, "to integrate the values inherent in the sustainable development into all aspects of learning to encourage changes in behavior that allow for a more sustainable and just society for all" (UNESCO, 2005, p. 5). This quote implies the holistic and inclusive aspect of ESD that continues to characterize the global agenda on education today (Tilbury, 1995, Moscardo, 2015). Most recently ESD moved from the DESD to the Aichi-Nagoya Declaration on Education for Sustainable Development in 2014 to update and reinforce ESD (UNESCO, 2014b). In addition, the declaration uses economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainability as a

framework. This further strengthens its use as a valid framework also today. Noteworthy, ESD is sometimes referred to as sustainability education (SE). However, in this study, only the term ESD is used. The holistic approach to education and SD that was introduced in the DESD, has come full circle with the SDGs. There is a revised vision of education within sustainable development instead of education for sustainable development (UNESCO, 2016).

In other words, it is not enough to teach about sustainability issues: sustainability should be embedded in all aspects of education. In fact, it is suggested that SD is not a separate subject but that it offers school-wide and integrated into many subjects (UNESCO, 2016). Also, the three pillars of economic social environmental sustainability need to be institutional and systemically integrated to be successful. Critiques of ESD include a vague definition and that the imprecise character of ESD trickles down to accountability and the responsibility of ESD (Tikly, 2013). It is supposed to include everyone and all contexts. This makes it difficult to evaluate and monitor (Tikly, 2013). Although the international agreement of the ESD and the importance of it is clear, who is doing what to accomplish the goals in various contexts, is often blurred. (Airey, Dredge & Gross, 2015).

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) has struggled with its terminology but, “at the second International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education, held in the Republic of Korea in 1999, UNESCO and ILO (in consultation with their respective Member States and partner agencies) jointly agreed on using the term technical and vocational education and training (TVET)” (Maclean & Wilson., 2009, p. lxxviii). This was an attempt to unite the field, but other terminology is still used today depending on the context. Also, the definition of TVET adopted at the Korean Congress was:

Those aspects of the educational process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences, and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupants in various sectors of economic and social life (UNESCO, 1999).

With the adoption of Education for All (EFA), TVET was somewhat covered with EFA goal 3 that states “ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programmes”. (UNESCO, 2000, p. 16). Also, the EFA global monitoring report focused on youth and skills (UNESCO, 2012b). Hence, TVET has gradually seen an increase in priority. This culminated in the SDGs and specifically in goal 4.4 that states that: “by 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship” (UN, 2015, 4.4).

Finally, TVET has risen to the foreground of the educational discourse. The field of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) has changed throughout history. These transformations relating to occupation requirements have usually been in response to globalization and technological changes and the demands made upon them by the societies they serve (Goldney et al, 2007; Maclean et al, 2009).

In addition, “Young people in developed nations are expected to change careers up to five times and work for 12 to15 different organizations in their lifetime” (Goldney et al., 2007, p. 26). This illustrated the need for education to evolve and adapt constantly due to global changes and the constant shift in focus and character of the job market. (Goldney et al., 2007). Furthermore, there is an increased global mobility that requires education and skills to be easily transferable and adaptable to new contexts. Education is expensive. However, TVET often with smaller classes and special equipment can cost three times more than general education. Some countries, including Sweden, have significantly increased their spending on TVET in recent years (Maclean et al., 2009; OECD, 2016c). Nonetheless, for many students and parents, it remains a ‘second-class’ education with low status (Fidgeon, 2010; Fien et al., 2009). In fact, in the past decades, TVET almost disappeared from the international aid agenda when the World Bank began investing heavily in primary education at the expense of TVET, which at times accounted for

just 8–9% of educational spending (Maclean et al., 2009). Today, TVET has risen to the forefront with the SDGs and its focus on vocational skills and decent jobs. Furthermore, there is a growing interest in the connection of TVET to life-long learning and its many dimensions and formats are reflected in the SDGs (UN, 2015). It remains to be seen if TVET can manifest itself on the global arena and claim its position and remain at the top of the political agenda.

TVET and Sustainable Development

The first effort to integrate ESD and TVET was at the 1999 Second International Congress held in Seoul, South Korea (UNESCO, 1999). In addition, UNESCO echoed this and states in its recommendations for TVET for the twenty-first century that it should “empower people to contribute to environmentally sound sustainable development through their occupation and other areas of their lives” (UNESCO, 2001, p. 9). The Bonn declaration in 2004 further agreed that “since education is considered the key to effective development strategies, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) must be the master key that can alleviate poverty, promote peace, conserve the environment improve the quality of life for all and help achieve sustainable development” (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2004, p.1). Correspondingly, in UNESCO’s strategies for TVET from post-2015, the potential of TVET and SD was reaffirmed, stating that, “every individual should have the possibility to acquire skills and knowledge necessary to form a sustainable future” (UNESCO, 2015, p. 56). Finally, at the end of the EFA and MDG era, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted in September 2015 (UN, 2015). With its broad focus, it recognizes the central role of TVET to achieve SD convincingly, thus cementing the position of SD and TVET. The increased attention to TVET partly emerged from high global youth unemployment. Most of these youth are not uneducated, but they also include educated individuals whose knowledge and skill do not match the labor market (Tikly, 2013). This is recognized by UNESCO in promoting future focus areas by stating:

TVET should integrate skills for life (including peace and green skills) and skills for work, including transversal skills and through this, provide perspectives for life and work. In rapidly changing labour markets and societies, transversal skills play an important role in keeping people employable. In line with UNESCO’s mandate, sustainable development and green skills should continue to be emphasized and mainstreamed throughout a new Strategy (UNESCO, 2015, p 56).

This shows the commitment to sustainability and the importance of transparency and a broader view of TVET. Not only as a provider of skills but also a long-term holistic view including lifelong learning. It also sends a strong message about the potential of SD and TVET to empower individuals. The focus is shifting to not only include economic but also social and environmental practice (Fien et al., 2009). However, many programs with a strong vocational focus, struggle with including SD in an already crowded curriculum (Dredge, et al., 2012; Goldney et al., 2007). Examples of concepts associated with three pillars in TVET include: “TVET and Economic sustainability: economic literacy, sustainable production sustainable consumption small enterprise management. TVET and environmental: ecological footprint eco-efficiency biodiversity the 5 R’s reducing review recycles and rethink. TVET and social sustainability: respect for a cultural diversity, gender equality, citizenship workplace relations” (Fien et al., 2009, p. xxv-xxvi). The role of the MDGs was alleviating poverty, and the focus on education was on access (UN, 2000). Agenda 2030 focuses more on quality education and on primary and informal education as well as adult education and TVET. However, to implement SD and TVET is challenging. A 2010 study in Southern and Eastern Africa identified one of the barriers of integrating SD in TVET as limited knowledge of the concept of SD among educators (Dubois et al., 2010). It is imperative that educators are ‘sustainability literate’ in order to communicate its message. A cohesiveness and systemic commitment are essential. This is not necessarily unique to TVET, but can probably be applied to general education as well. Despite the efforts and recognitions of SD in TVET by the international community,

there is a further need to share best practices on the integration of SD in TVET (Fien et al., 2009). Although there is no universal model, this study can shed light on the issue in a specific context.

SD and Tourism Education

Tourism is a complex and highly interrelated industry that usually includes sub-sectors relating to accommodation, transportation, food and beverage, recreation and travel services (UNWTO, 2016). Tourism has more than one definition; henceforth, United Nations World Tourism Organization's (UNWTO) definition will be used in this study. According to UNWTO, tourism is comprised of, "the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes" (ILO, UNWTO, 2008, p. 4). Underpinned by an increase in available income and leisure time, tourism in the world is increasing and has manifested itself as a significant economic contributor, especially in developing countries (OECD, 2016c; UNWTO, 2016). Its direct, indirect and induced contribution to the world's GDP is 10 percent (UNWTO, 2016). Additionally, it provides a wide range of employment opportunities, both skilled and unskilled, with a high participation rate of women (UNWTO, 2016). In fact, it provides one in eleven jobs globally (UNWTO, 2016). It is also providing opportunities for small business owners, including minorities and the support of local culture (OECD, 2016c). The global impact of tourism can be demonstrated by the fact that tourism is closely interlinked to the SDGs and can contribute to all 17 SDGs (UNWTO, n.d.). The exponential growth of tourism puts exceptional demands on tourism to act sustainably responsible (Boley, 2011). Meanwhile, tourism can both have positive impact in creating job opportunities and a negative impact on, for instance, the environment (Boley, 2011).

In the tourism narrative, there has been a shift in focus on not only economic profit but also to include environmental issues underpinned by the rapid depletion of natural resources (Boley, 2011). In other words, sustainability is nothing new to the tourism industry which was fast to embrace SD to reduce its ecological footprint (Boley, 2011; Chawla, 2015). However, tourism educators need to follow the lead of the tourism industry. The awareness and commitment to SD need also to be transferred and applied to tourism education. Tourism education as at times tampered with its acceptance as a prestigious degree, but due to its interdisciplinary character and a flourishing tourism industry with ample opportunity for employment, it has gained in popularity and status (Fidgeon, 2010). As the tourism industry grows, so does the need for educated industry professionals. Despite the wide global discussion of SD and tourism, generally, the topic just recently entered the tourism curriculum (Telfer & Hashimoto, 2001). TVET tourism courses are available in almost every country, particularly in higher education. TVET can be provided as a tourism program or within programs or courses such as business or geography (Boley, 2011; Fidgeon, 2010).

While the providers of tourism education vary depending on the context, it is available in many parts of the world because tourism is an important part of development in many countries (Boley, 2011; Fidgeon, 2010). It is recommended to infuse sustainable development into the tourism courses, including articulation with other subjects to achieve SD being embedded across the tourism curriculum (Boley, 2011; Deale et al., 2009). In the sustainable tourism education discourse, while there is an agreement of the importance of SD in tourism education, there is no consensus on how and to what extent it should be present in the curriculum (Barber et al., 2011; Boley, 2011; Deale et al. 2009; Dredge et al, 2012; Millar et al., 2013). Similarly, what is the correct way to integrate and implement SD in the tourism curriculum? There is no agreed method. Generally, TVET has a very high vocational focus and struggle with a crowded curriculum (Boyle, Wilson & Dimmock, 2015). Tourism education is no exception. This adds to the complexity of SD in TVET. The three dimensions of SD vary in importance and priority depending on the stakeholder or the context (Dwyer, 2005).

However, it is imperative that tourism students and future tourism industry professionals do not only know about sustainability but that they also can practice SD. This includes applying the three dimensions

of sustainability and understanding their interconnectedness to promote economic, social and environmental progress. Lastly, as previous research has demonstrated there is a limited understanding of SD among educators, teacher education about sustainable development (Dubois et al., 2010). Therefore, an explicit description of SD in the curriculum is important to avoid misconceptions and one-sided interpretations.

Education and sustainable tourism development

Education plays a central role in shaping the transformation of individuals and societies towards sustainability. Education for sustainable development is an educational vision to balance human and economic well-being with cultural traditions and reverence for the Earth's natural resources (Jeronen, E., 2022). It applies the results of sustainability science to educational practices, guiding the choices of learning objectives, teaching content, and teaching and learning methods (Barth, M., 2016). Sustainability science is a new and independent scientific discipline attempting to incorporate scientific research into physically, socially, and morally complex domains with unique problem-solving agenda (Nagatsu, M. et al., 1807-1817).

Among the 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) in the United Nations' Agenda 2030 for sustainable development (UN, 2015), eight address social dimensions. The Global Goals for Sustainable Development in 2015 are to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all. There are also interrelationships between these ones and environmental, economic, and process dimensions. However, despite the emphasis of the United Nations' Agenda 2030 for sustainable development on social aspects, it is usually inevitably neglected (Kagan, C.; Burton, M.H., 2018). It is widely recognized that there is an increasing awareness of the importance of environmental protection, and a critical need for tourism and hospitality education on sustainability.

It is widely agreed that education and training are important to the achievement of sustainable tourism (Cater & Goodall, 1992; Ham Sutherland, & Meganck, 1991; Johnson, 1998) and sustainable development (UNESCO UNEP, 1996). Unfortunately, there is much less agreement about who should learn what, from whom, and how. This is perhaps unsurprising, given that tourism probably touches, at all levels, upon a wider range of social interests and economic sectors than any other industry (Cater, 1995), and given that most academic disciplines have a bearing of some sort on the question of how to make tourism sustainable.

Ham, Sutherland, & Meganck (1991) identify four key audiences for environmental interpretation in developing countries as subsistence-level locals, upper and middle-class nationals, influential nationals, and foreign tourists. They make the point that the environmental learning needs of each of these groups are different. Taking a broader view of tourism, a number of other target groups for sustainable tourism education and training suggest themselves, including employees and managers in the hospitality, travel and construction industries, government officials in host countries, potential tourists at their point of origin and, of course, children at school who may assume these or other roles in the future. Each of these groups is likely to have a different perspective on the environment and sustainability, and a different expectation of what education, in its wide sense, might offer them. Many are likely to believe that they have more to teach than to learn.

However, different groups have different access to the power and resources to enable them to put their own analysis forward, and are likely to marshal definitions of terms, moral arguments and scientific evidence in ways which support their existing view of the problems and priorities. Environmental educators and trainers, therefore, must address a heterogeneous audience among which a variety of preconceived ideas relating to tourism and tourism development are likely to be held. Further, it seems clear that uncertainty and contestation, even about the meaning of "sustainable tourism," are likely to

persist for the foreseeable future. Equally clearly, environmental education and training which helps to create and support sustainable tourism is needed now.

Education tourism practice has a significant role in sustainable tourism development. Sustainable practices in the tourism sector are crucial for the reduction of the negative impacts on nature, and their better integration into the economic and socio-cultural environment of local communities. In achieving its aim to identify the degree of application of various sustainable practices (Ashwal-Fluss et al., 2014).

Education for sustainable development (EfSD) is closely related to an active, participatory learning process because it encourages learners to ask critical questions, question and clarify values, envision a more positive future, think systematically, apply what they have learned, and explore the relationships between traditions and innovations (Tilbury, D., 2011). Beyond conventional teacher-centered teaching and learning methods, tourism and hospitality educators have also been encouraged to implement various student-centered teaching and learning methods (Kim, A.K.; Davies, J., 2014). These kinds of methods are derived from the student-centered idea (Machemer, P.L.; Crawford, P., 2007).

The realization of sustainable development in society requires continuous updating of sustainable development skills in order to maintain and develop professional skills, as well as nurturing a change-promoting educational culture, both in education in general but also in TE. However, there is no integrated approach to education so far. (Carlisle et al. 2021) stresses that sustainability skills are interdisciplinary.

The concepts SE and EfS are often used as synonyms (Moscardo, G. 2015). In this study, we use the concept of SE in order to draw attention to the role of teaching and learning methods in supporting sustainable development thinking in STE. Research has shown that, although studies on sustainable development education (SDE) and tourism education (TE) have been published in sufficient quantity, there are very few studies on teaching and learning methods for supporting sustainable development thinking in STE.

Although professional knowledge is essential for work efficiency, research shows that possessing only technical skills has become insufficient to meet the challenges of today's business environment (Robles, Citation 2012). Namely, employers are no longer interested in individuals who possess only specific skills but lack other significant skills, particularly soft skills (Binsaeed et al., Citation 2016). According to Andrews and Higson (Citation 2008), soft skills refer to interpersonal skills, dealing with people and attitudes, which enhance business efficiency and interpersonal relations. While investigating the managers' perspective, Robles (Citation 2012) distinguished the top ten soft skills necessary in business, with communication skills ranked in second place, right after integrity.

Effective business communication is a prerequisite for the successful performance of any company; however, its importance is particularly evident in the service industry, where it is the essence of the service business. When it comes to tourism and hospitality, the significance of communication is even greater because communication in tourism goes far beyond conveying information and it has a much deeper meaning, especially in the interaction between tourists and employees (Jameson, Citation 2007; Lolli, Citation 2013a; Nikolich & Sparks, Citation 1995). Moreover, according to Wesley et al. (Citation 2017), the most important soft skill in tourism is communication. Research shows that hospitality managers spend as much as 80% of their day interpersonally communicating with others (Woods & King, 2010, as cited in Lolli, Citation 2013b), and their communication greatly affects employee job satisfaction (Paksoy et al., Citation 2017). On the other hand, Go et al. (Citation 1996) highlighted the employees in direct contact with guests as being the most important ones, and proposed a new organizational structure model in the shape of a reversed pyramid. Accordingly, all tourism employees have to be able to maintain efficient communication with guests, colleagues and all other stakeholders at all levels to maintain a positive business environment (Lolli, Citation 2013a).

Several studies have recently aimed at exploring the importance of multilingualism as a key factor in business competitiveness (Hagen, 2006). This phenomenon becomes even more relevant when it comes to the hospitality sector. Globalization does not only occur in mass market destinations. It can also be perceived on a smaller scale in countries and regions off the beaten track (Cañas & Pérez, 2014b). English is no longer enough (Bosch, 2014; Piller, 2012) and tourism companies are carrying out different foreign language training methods for their employees in order to provide a better customer service and also get higher economic benefits. Companies need to adapt according to the needs of their customers. This includes knowledge of other foreign languages and cultures. “The trick is to find a balance between authenticity and merchantability” (Heller, 2005). Visitors in the region come from a variety of backgrounds, which creates a multilingual panorama.

Government institution's initiatives for Sustainable Tourism Development

According to Rwanda Tourism policy 2009, the overall objective is to increase tourism revenues in a sustainable manner, generate profits for reinvestment and create jobs by developing new and distinctive, market-led products that are clearly positioned and promoted in the marketplace. For Rwanda, sustainable development incorporates environmental, social and economic elements. The following strategic objectives will be achieved through the implementation of the 2009 Sustainable Tourism Development Master Plan for Rwanda. Some priorities were taken into consideration including education program:

Establishing regulated international quality tourism training programmes in existing and new educational and vocational schools and colleges, concentrating on operative skills training to meet immediate industry needs; Providing higher level education and skills training throughout the country through arrangements with regional educational establishments; Provide train the trainer programmes for selected industry operatives so as to enable on the job and industry based training for existing employees; Provide train the trainer support for existing educational and vocational schools; Provide special training in communities in support of community based tourism projects and SMMEs; Involve the industry in the development of human resource policies and implementation; Provide educational establishments with access to materials and resources required; Developing RDB as a centre of excellence, adequately resourced so that it ranks amongst the leading small national tourist organisations in the world. Contract Technical Assistance in Marketing, Development and HRD to mentor the RDB/Industry Executives Provide training in tourism for focal points in local government, particularly on planning and destination management; Establish and Human Resources Development Advisory council; Provide crash courses for 6-8 trainers on tourism related issues; Set up a Tourism and Hospitality Training Institute in Kigali; Develop a national tour guiding skills program and a tour guide training program; Establish registration and licensing of guides.

According to RDB, the Government of Rwanda aims to transform the country into an upper-middle income country by 2035, and a high income country by 2050. Achieving Rwanda's social and economic development objectives is mainly dependent upon its most valuable resource it's people. To achieve these goals, the Rwandan people must be provided opportunities to build knowledge, skills, and attitudes to compete in the labor market and contribute to the social and political life of their country. Some incentives were set to support the Education sector like; Corporate income tax holiday of up to 7 years is provided when investing at least an amount equivalent to 50 million USD, Accelerated depreciation rate of 50% for the first year, Foreign companies investing at least 250,000 USD are allowed to recruit three foreigners without a labor test and exemption of VAT on imported Technical and Vocational Education training materials.

According to (Stefan Trines, 2019); Education is a government priority. The Rwandan government realizes that raising the level of educational attainment is crucial for the economic prosperity of this tiny country that lacks natural resources. Notably, Rwanda has one of the highest elementary school enrollment rates on the continent. In 2012 the country won the prestigious Commonwealth Education

Good Practice Award following the construction of more than 8,600 classrooms between 2009 and 2011. Rwanda's government in partnership with Microsoft built "smart" classrooms across the country and plans to bring computers, internet connectivity, and basic software packages to all of Rwanda's schools by 2020. The country's development strategy prioritizes "science and technology education and ICT skills," and emphasizes "vocational and technical training in the fields of technology, engineering and management" to develop human capital and turn Rwanda into a "sophisticated knowledge-based economy."

One reason for this growing inflow is the regional integration and harmonization of education systems within the East African Community (EAC), as well as growing research collaboration between EAC member countries. Research and scholarship funding by international organizations also help boost mobility in the region. The World Bank, for example, funded the establishment of 24 academic centers of excellence at African universities in the Eastern and Southern Africa Higher Education Centers of Excellence Project (ACE II, following ACE I for Western and Central Africa) in 2016. Designed to function as regional incubators of technical innovation and graduate research in eight African countries, these ACE II centers have capacity and funding for more than 3,500 graduate students over a span of five years, including at least 700 PhD students. Four of the centers are housed at the University of Rwanda (UR) and attract graduate students from other African countries like Burundi, which does not host any ACE centers.

Administration of the Education System in Rwanda

The Republic of Rwanda, as it's officially called, is administratively divided into five provinces: the Eastern, Northern, Southern, and Western provinces, as well as Kigali City. The five provinces are further subdivided into 30 districts (uturere), 416 sectors (imirenge), 2,148 cells (utugari), and 14,837 villages (imudungu).

There are various bodies which help to manage, regulate, monitor and evaluate the education system. The General Inspectorate is tasked with assuring pedagogical and management standards throughout the school system. It works closely with relevant departments of MINEDUC and through Inspectors at District level. The Planning Directorate in MINEDUC has conducted studies in critical areas in education, such as Monitoring Learning Achievement (MLA) and Girls' Education. Together with the detailed yearly statistical data (Administration Data) the Planning Directorate collects at all levels of the system, this constitutes basic information for educational planning and the management of the education system (MINEDUC, 2003). Rwanda is committed to International Development Targets in Education such as Education for All (EFA) by 2015, narrowing gender disparity in education by 2005, and the use of ICT in Education. It is also committed to regional goals such as Outcome Based Curriculum (OBC) and constant Monitoring of Learning Achievement (MLA), and the development of partnership with donors and the private sector in education. The role of education and training in globalisation cannot be over emphasized and Rwanda recognises the benefits/advantages that it can receive from globalisation. Scientific and Technological processes shall be developed in support of the application of science to eco-environmental tourism with a view to supporting the development of the tourism sector in Rwanda. Capacity Building and human resource development shall be carried out to develop local Rwandan capacity in all areas of research related to cultural, historical and natural tourist attractions. This shall include tourist impact assessment in tourism areas, and socio-economic studies on populations living in the tourist sites (MINEDUC, 2006);

According to Stefan Trines, 2019; School education is centrally overseen by the national Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) in Kigali and administered locally by District Education Offices (DEOs). Whereas the MINEDUC sets the overall policies and strategies, DEOs manage and monitor schools at the local level. Overall goals for the education systems are generally set forth in multi-year strategic education sector development plans. The Rwanda Education Board (REB), an agency of the MINEDUC,

is responsible for developing school curricula, examinations in the school system, and standards for teacher training.

Higher education, on the other hand, is the sole responsibility of the central government and overseen by the Higher Education Council (HEC), an agency under the MINEDUC established in 2007. The HEC is tasked with setting standards and enhancing and monitoring the quality of education and research at HEIs; it is also responsible for the vetting and recognition of private HEIs and the accreditation of their programs.

In higher education, the Rwandan government seeks to boost the use of English by requiring Rwandan universities to teach English courses as a compulsory part of their curricula. Students must not only muster an English proficiency exam to be admitted, they must also pass English language exams during their studies to progress from one academic year to the next. The government is currently also rolling out mandatory English tests for university instructors. It hopes to extend these tests to schoolteachers in the coming years with the help of the British Council.

The government has in recent years adopted various measures to better integrate the different forms of TVET and expand the system, including the creation of the TVET qualifications framework and the establishment of a single oversight body, the Workforce Development Authority (WDA) which changed into Rwanda TVET Board and NESA under the MINEDUC.

At the post-secondary level, TVET is provided by a small number of private colleges and the public Rwanda Polytechnic (RP), a large institution created in 2017 as the result of the merger of eight Integrated Polytechnic Regional Colleges (IPRCs) across Rwanda. RP's constituent IPCRs offer an applied post-secondary Diploma and an Advanced Diploma program in fields like civil engineering, information technology, or wildlife management. Programs are between two and three years in length and may include an industrial internship. Admission requires an upper-secondary qualification like the Certificate of Technical Secondary Education A2. Higher learning education institutions are also increasing in number with quality education.

The HEC is the designated quality assurance body in Rwandan tertiary education. Its mission is to "improve the organization and functioning of higher learning institutions," to "set norms and standards for accrediting private higher learning institutions," and to monitor compliance with these norms.

Tourism and hospitality is regarded as the fastest growing industry in the world, with Africa having a significant potential for developing the sector. Many African countries including Rwanda can achieve sustainable economic development and poverty reduction through tourism. According to the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) and the International Labor Office (ILO), there is worldwide consensus that employment generated by tourism/hospitality industry can be substantial in many national economies, contributing to their economic growth and providing employment and income to people (World Employment Report 1998-1999, ILO, 1999, Geneva).

The Government of Rwanda has identified tourism sector as one of the priority sectors in achieving Vision 2020 and contributor to the eradication of poverty in the country (Republic of Rwanda, 2007). The period 1994-2001 marked the government's efforts to revive tourism sector in the country by improving and establishing a tourism friendly policies and environment. Policy and legal frameworks, functioning institutional arrangements for coordination, reporting/communication and mobilization have been established to enhance the operation of the sector in Rwanda. The Rwanda Tourism Strategy was developed in a participatory and inclusive manner and approved by the Cabinet in 2002. A National Tourism Policy was put in place in 2009. A revised Tourism Strategy ("Sustaining the Momentum") was elaborated in 2007. The revised tourism strategy (2007) identified primates as Rwanda's unique selling proposition, but recognized the need to diversify the tourism sector and identified international

conferences as well as birding as two additional core segments. Adjustment, refocus and diversification are strategic processes in the tourism industry all over the world. This is because of new and emerging challenges including; increased competition among tourist destinations, greater expectations on the part of the customers, and the opportunities offered by expanding segments of demand. The effectiveness of these adjustments, and the improvement of quality of products and services, depends strongly on the availability of skilled human capital (stock) for the sector. A high quality and skilled work force can ensure effective competitiveness and innovation, increased number of visitors and foreign exchange earnings, increased turnover for establishments, and effective adjustment of the sector to changing market demands (RDB,2012).

A 10-year Sustainable Tourism Master Plan for Rwanda has been developed with support from the United Nations World Tourism Organization (Republic of Rwanda, 2009b). This master plan consolidates the previous strategies and policies, gives clear and detailed recommendations, and sets ambitious targets. Tourist arrivals are projected to increase from about 980,000 in 2008 to over 2 million in 2020, thereby increasing foreign exchange earnings from about US\$ 200 million to over US\$ 600 million. The government has shown strong commitment to reform. Although the different strategies have not yet been implemented completely, the government has consistently demonstrated its strong commitment to the execution of reforms and the overall improvement of the performance of the sector. A number of incentives are offered to investors in the tourism & hospitality industry. According to the investment code, tax exemptions are granted to investors who invest US\$ 100,000 or more in a facility. Airplanes imported to transport tourists are tax exempt and specialized vehicles such as hotel shuttles are exempt from import and excise duty. An investor in the tourism and hotel industry is also exempted from payment of import duties on equipment, such as bedroom fittings, swimming pools, outdoor leisure equipment, etc.

According to Tourism and Hospitality sector report (2012), there has been no higher education institution offering courses on tourism and hospitality, especially at graduate and diploma levels until 2008/09 when RTUC was accredited and started a program. In addition, the few existing training institutions are not currently offering the critical and priority courses that could support the industry in Rwanda. Such courses, as indicated early include the following: Tourism Product Development and Management, Destination Management, Tourism business development & management specialist, Tourism Marketing, Tourism & Hospitality Entrepreneurship, Tourism Resort Operations, Management of Game parks and Historical sites, Events Organization and Management, Cultural tourism Specialists, Eco Tourism specialists, Tourism historians and archeologists, National Arts & Music, Front Office Management and Operations, Event management specialists, Hotel Engineers, Interior Design and Décor. The survey has also revealed that the few available training institutions also have the following major challenges: Lack or have limited facilities and equipment for practical instruction in hotel and hospitality industry, Have limited qualified academic staff, Have no or small library and very few relevant text-books, Have limited financial resources, Most of the institutions are small privately owned by investors, who have limited idea of what is needed in the industry.

A lot of financial resources and energy is spent on „customer service“ training and awareness creation annually. Although the results have been encouraging, the training has not reached the big number of employees in the sector who are less competent in soft skills including languages. As customer service continues, specific skills training on technical areas should also be mounted and funded countrywide. (Hotel Manager, 2012).

The work force Development Authority (WDA) was a legally established Government Institution under law Number 03/2009 of 27/03/2009 as amended by law N°39/2011 of 13/09/2011 with a mandate of empowering Rwandans with the right skills for successful implementation of National Development programmes.

According to Rukundo, 2021 improvement has been shown in different stages upon reforms from different government institutions: In 2008, the Government of Rwanda initiated Workforce Development Authority as an institutional framework to provide a strategic response to the skills development challenges facing the country across all sectors of the economy with the following mandates: Established by the law no 03/March/2009 and restructured by the law no N°42/2016 of 18/10/2016; In 2013 new competency-based curricula were developed and piloted in Southern Province, Rwanda TVET qualification framework elaborated; Vocational training centers (VTC) and Technical secondary school (TSS): After the establishment of WDA, the supervision of CFJ shifted from the Ministry of youth, sport and culture to the ministry of education. Then, the name changed to VTC, and all secondary schools offering vocational courses become technical secondary schools (TSS). Integrated polytechnics regional centers (IPRCs): In 2007, Tumba College of Technology was established in Northern Province in Rulindo District. Five IPRCS were established in 2008, namely IPRC Kigali, IPRC EAST, IPRC WEST which inherited the existing physical infrastructures of ETO in their respective provinces. All IPRCs were under the supervision of WDA but since 2018 after the implementation of new restructuring of WDA, IPRCs are under supervision of Rwanda polytechnic (RP). On 28 February 2018, Gishali Integrated College was established in Eastern Province, Rwamagana District. 2018: Rwanda polytechnic (RP): In 2017, after Education sector reform, Rwanda Polytechnic (RP) is established by the law N° 21 bis/2017 of 28/04/2017 but become operational since March, 2018.

Hands-on skills acquired from TVET and employment opportunities In 2013, Everard van Kemenade (2013) conducted a study on Hands-on skills acquired from technical and vocational education and training (TVET) program components/mechanisms and their overall effect on employment opportunities in a developing country context. Using secondary data, his descriptive case study integrates the realistic evaluation framework of Pawson and Tilley with Total Quality Management (TQM) frameworks. He found that his case study's TVET system adopts/adapts international best practices.

Following the implementation of the 2008 TVET strategy, the proportion of formal TVET graduates who were recognized as competent based on their hands-on skills by the assessment and certification system increased from 17.42 percent in 2009/2010 to 40.23 percent in 2011/2012. Nevertheless, there is regional variation. He concluded that TVET reforms that are based on TQM frameworks could improve hands-on skills achievements in developing countries by enhancing awareness, coordination, integration, flexibility, participation, empowerment, accountability and a quality culture.

Nevertheless, his research is limited by lack of longitudinal data on competency test results. There is also a need for further investigation into the practice of TQM and the sources of differences in internal effectiveness across TVET institutions. Based on his findings, he suggested that his description of the case study reform experience, which is based on international best experience, could better inform policy makers and practitioners in TVET elsewhere in Africa.

Karikari et al., (2015) conducted a study on Effective Components of a Technical and Vocational Education Program: The Nigerian Case. The study asserted that TVET can create better pathways from school to work based on hands-on skills acquired by graduates. Effective TVET programs equip students with the practical skills, knowledge, and entrepreneurial tools that match labor market needs. Such programs provide quality training and accreditation in the field of study and directly link students to industry through apprenticeships.

Last, it ensures that all students, regardless of gender, are equipped to make informed career choices, and provides equal access to both men and women to opportunities to sustainably improve their livelihoods. The study recommended that; it is important to have an effective TVET program as it would enhance the ability of the youth in their way from School to Work. According to Akilah Institute for Women (2018) TVET programmes should be effective to achieve the expected results. In a study conducted by this

institution on the effectiveness of TVET programmes in Africa, if TVET courses are to be successful, their design must be “demand-driven, and the education and private sector development sectors must coordinate to ensure this is fulfilled and must be based on hands-on skills”. Akilah, located in Kigali, provides the finest example of how an education institution can become the bridge between what the vast labour market demands and what education institutions should supply. Entrepreneurship skills and employment availability Kuyini in a study entitled Barriers to youth employment conducted in 2014 in Ghana found that Youth do not have the ease of entry into the workforce or the work stability that their parents experienced. There is also greater demand by employers for entrepreneurship skills whereas a lot of young people pretend to possess soft skills as well as qualifications.

WDA launched trainings with the importance to improve the service delivery, 143 participants were undergoing the training aimed at equipping them with professional and technical capacity in culinary and food and beverage service skills, housekeeping and front office operations. The two-phase training that started on April 4th 2011 will last a month. The training programme started in Musanze, Rubavu, Karongi, Rusizi and will be carried out countrywide (New times, 2011).

According to The World Bank report, 2011; Strategic documents like the Vision 2020 and ESPRS, MINEDUC's activities are guided by the ESSP and various sub-sector strategies and policies. For TVET, the government has adopted an extensive and forward-looking framework for TVET consisting of a TVET Policy, an Integrated TVET Concept Paper, and a draft TVET Implementation Plan. The TVET Policy (2008) has four pillars: (i) systems development – including development of the national training authority (the Workforce Development Agency, WDA), and design of a national qualifications framework; (ii) expansion of access; (iii) quality through curriculum development and instructor training; and (iv) sustainable financing. The thrust of the policy framework is to establish closer linkages between enterprises and training supply, to structure training based on updated occupational competencies, and to integrate TVET. Integration has a triple meaning: integration of all technical and vocational provision, public and private, under the WDA; horizontal integration across the levels of training – from vocational to technical secondary to tertiary secondary; and regional integration of training providers under the coordination and supervision of IPRCs in each province. The TVET Concept Paper elaborates on how integration will take place with focus on development of the WDA and Integrated Polytechnic Regional Centers (IPRCs). The WDA Strategy and Action Plan (December 2009) translates strategic objectives into detailed actions and steps assigned to various units of WDA.

Rwanda's national development agenda, Vision 2020, envisages that the country attains middle-income status by the year 2020. The third mid-term development plan, the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS) II, focuses among others on the creation of 200,000 new jobs annually. This is in response to the country's urgent need to put its young labour market entrants into productive use in order to sustain and accelerate economic growth. Moreover, a structural transformation of the country's economy is needed to facilitate the movement of its workforce away from scarce agricultural land to higher productivity non-agricultural activities. The ambitious development goals of the Government require a bold response of the country's education and training systems to provide increasing opportunities for relevant skills development in order to prepare young Rwandans for productive employment and self-employment.

The efforts to strengthen workplace learning respond to an increasingly widespread emphasis in the Rwandan policy framework to deepen the linkages of the education sector with the world of work, and to increase the relevance of skills development through stronger partnerships with enterprises. Learning in the workplace through apprenticeships, internships and industrial attachments is generally considered a still underdeveloped resource to achieve these goals. Against this background the EDPRS II under its theme “Productivity and Youth Employment” calls for increased efforts to engage companies in training and increase their involvement in internships, apprenticeships and work experience programs. The

Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) 2013/14-2017/18, which commits itself to deliver a significant increase in access to high-quality TVET that meet the demand of the current and future labour market, proposes much stronger participation in the provision of training from the side of employers, industry bodies, the private sector more broadly, and those responsible for leading and steering the economic development process. It also calls for a massive increase in practice-based learning opportunities, including apprenticeships, internships, industrial attachments and work placements.

Responding to this new emphasis formulated in the EDPRS II and the ESSP, cooperation with the private sector is a major theme in the Draft TVET Policy 2013/14-2017/18 of March 2014 and the National TVET Strategy 2013/14-2017/18. The TVET Strategy reflects an important paradigm shift in Rwanda placing quality and relevance of TVET as its priority. It recognizes that a mere expansion of TVET is not appropriate to solve the problems of unemployment and low productivity in the economy, and thus does not represent the right response to combating poverty.(MIFOTRA, 2015)

The government of Rwanda through the ministry of education and Workforce Development Authority has launched the initiative to train 9,000 youth in short-term course training. The support is part of Rwf21.6 billion dubbed “Skills Development Fund: SDF” funded by World Bank. MINEDUC, WDA signed an MOU with the selected training companies regarding the projects implementation (WDA,2016)

According to RP 2021 annual report, TVET has emerged as one of the most effective human resource development strategies that Rwanda has embraced in order to train and modernize the technical workforce for national development. Since its development in 2008, the Government of Rwanda put efforts to expand TVET and attract local and foreign investments in order to produce a skilled and competent labour force. Moreover, TVET is expected to be responsive to ever changing demands in the labour market through the development of new training programs, applying new training technologies and providing opportunities for employees to engage in continuous professional development and life-long learning.

In that framework, the Rwanda Polytechnic Higher Learning Institution was established under law No. 22/2017 of 30/05/2017 to implement the Technical Skills Development in Rwanda through Vocational and Technical Training, competitiveness and employability. Rwanda Polytechnic achieves its mission through eight (8) colleges namely IPRC Karongi, Kitabi, Tumba, Musanze, Ngoma, Huye, Kigali and Gishari. In its new structure, RP also coordinates activities carried out in Hospitality Management Institute (HMI), the Rwanda TVET Trainer Institute (RTTI) and Africa Digital Media Academy (ADMA) as a special Academy that empowers young stars with skills necessary to work in the digital media industry.

Teaching implementation and standards & regulation. After this reform the Workforce Development Authority (WDA) was assigned the responsibility for TVET Quality Standards and Inspection whereas Rwanda Polytechnic Higher Learning Institution was assigned a responsibility of TVET implementation and employable Skills Development through IPRCs (Integrated Polytechnic Regional Colleges) and TVET schools (Former Vocational Training Centres and Technical Secondary schools) as well as special academies (Nyundo School of art and Music, Rwanda Coding Academy, Sports academies, Rutongo Mining School and ADMA). RP developed 24 curricula in order to implement CBT-CBA for level 6&7. With development partners (GIZ-HA, APEFE, and SEAD) have developed other curricula for level 6&7, plus curricula developed under the PSG project. The total number of TVET diploma and advanced diploma curricula are 39 Curricula. RP signed different MoUs (Memorandum of Understanding) which outline an understanding on areas of cooperation and partnership between the Parties that leads to Skills Development through Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in the different sectors such as: training of employees, exchanging skilled personnel and experts in technical skills, Sharing of physical facilities in the aim of skills development such as laboratories, workshops, software, tools and

equipment, Organizing joint seminars, conferences, workshops, and public lectures, providing technical support in curricula development especially in the areas of energy and electrical technology, agriculture and animal Resources, transport, logistics, construction, hospitality management...

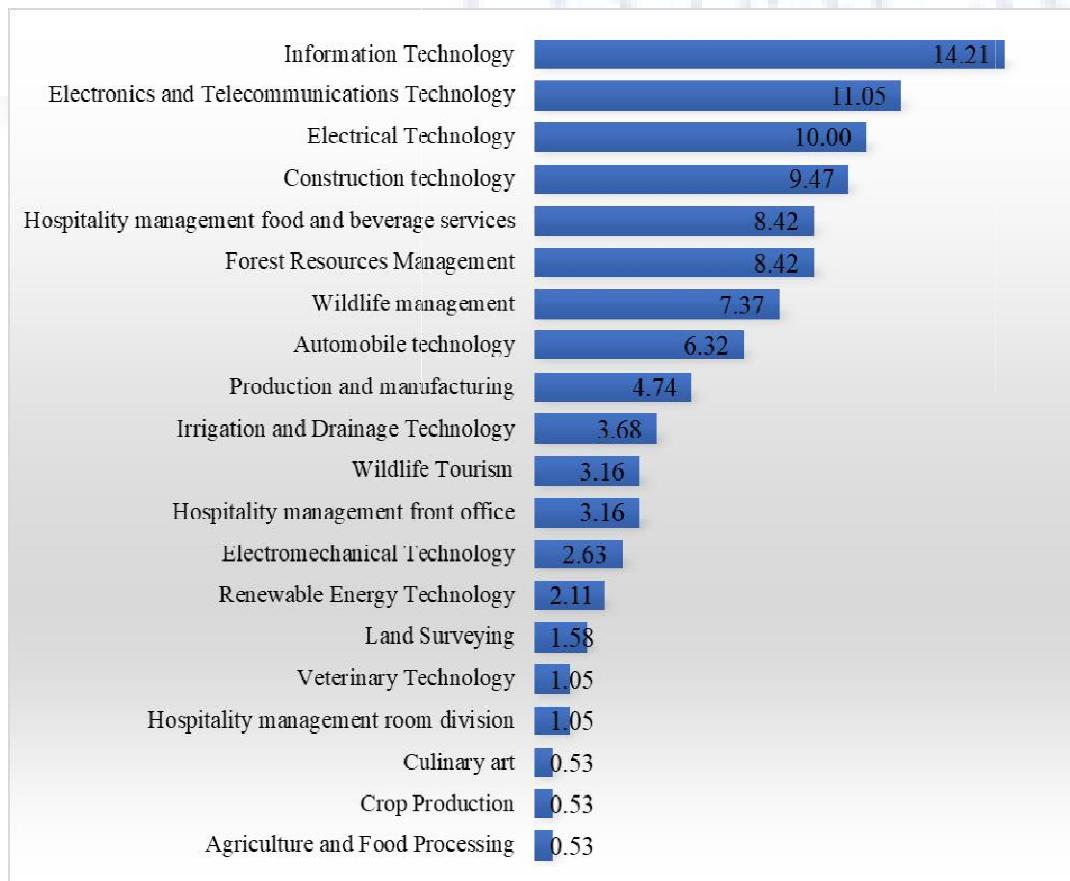
Between 1st July 2020 until 30th, June 2021, RP Head Office signed MoUs with REG, BIWE, Partner Africa- CSC Koblenz, KILIMO TRUST, KEPLER, ITE Education Services Singapore, MASS Build Ltd, HGU (Handong Global University)/ KOREA, 250 Startups, RP/IPRC Ngoma and NESTAAH+ CO Ltd, STES Group Ltd, Nyereka Tech Ltd and Centre Saint Joseph Kibungo, City of Kigali.

National Employment Program achievement Table 1: National Employment Program status

SN	Program	Number
1	Massive Vocation Training (MVT)	843
2	Rapid Response Training (RRT)	400
3	Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	1929
4	Integrated craftsmen production centers (ICPC)	230
5.	Reconversion program (RP)	85
TOTAL		3487

Source: RP, 2021

Figure 1. Graduates Employment by trade

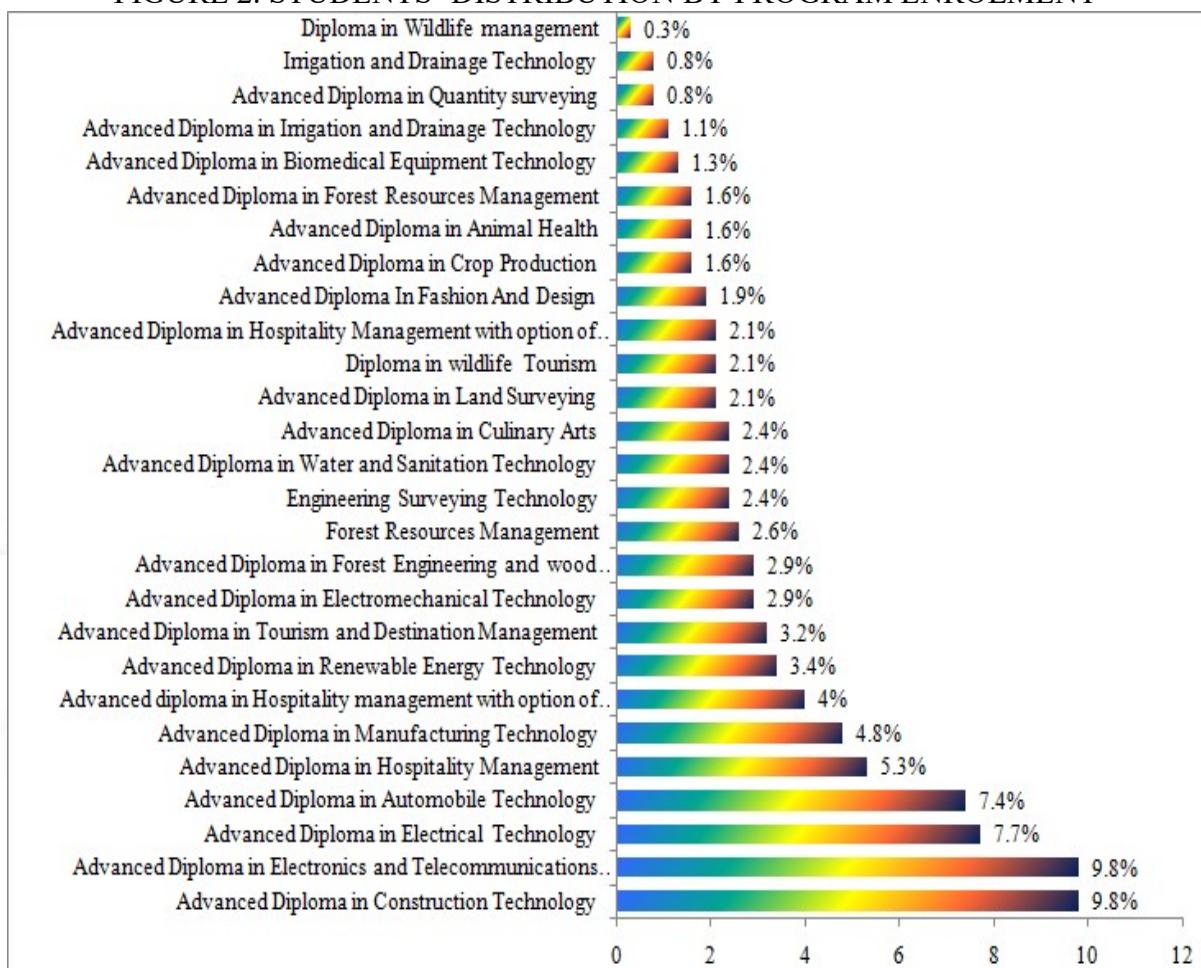


Source: RP Graduate employability survey, 2021

Over the last decades, job creation, especially off-farm jobs, has been and it remains one of the major government and development partner's priorities in Rwanda. This is reflected in the National Strategy for

Transformation (NST1) in its priority area 1, it envisages to “create 1,500,000 (over 214,000 annually) off-farm, decent and productive jobs for economic development”. From this, it is clear that employability skills remain instrumental if Rwanda is to achieve the above targets. This cannot be possible without the development of human capital. Without competent, qualified trainers it is impossible to produce TVET graduates with the types of competencies required by the modern labour market. In 2019, the employment rate within 6 months after graduation was 75.2% in polytechnic. However, the employment status was lower where the rate was 60.7%.

FIGURE 2. STUDENTS' DISTRIBUTION BY PROGRAM ENROLMENT



Source: RP Students' SatisfactionSurvey report, 2021

Private institutions and Partners with Sustainable Tourism development

The government, RDB, PSF Tourism chambers and the investors in the sector need to develop a strategy for taking advantage and using foreign skills (borrowed capital) to support, develop and make the sector competitive and grow faster than it is now: Mobilize and market Rwanda to attract professionals who can volunteer to come: Target friends of Rwanda (philanthropists, Rwanda in diaspora, private investors etc.) to start and support a ‘Rwanda Tourism Expert Fund’ (RUTEF) that can be used to give foreigners incentives to come, work and stay in Rwanda.

In june 2019, GIZ with the Chamber of Tourism Rwanda organized a study tour in Kenya, The overall aims of the study tour were to introduce key representatives from the Rwanda Chamber of Tourism and the Rwandan Hospitality & Tourism (H&T) Associations to approaches, practices and experience in H&T Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Kenya, to foster regional cooperation in the context of the East African Community (EAC) and to establish exchange platforms with Kenyan

institutions involved in H&T TVET. The visits and exchanges aimed at providing an insight into the measures taken by key Kenyan institutions regarding the development and revision of demand-driven and internationally recognized H&T curricula, the introduction of dual-system TVET approaches in Kenya and the involvement of the private sector in TVET planning, coordination and delivery. Furthermore, the study tour was to provide Kenyan institutions with the opportunity to learn from Rwanda experiences. During their stay in Nairobi the delegates visited various institutions including: Technical and Vocational Education and Training Curriculum Development, Assessment and Certification Council (TVET CDACC), Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD), Kenya Tourism Board (KTB), Kenya Tourism Federation (KTF), Kenya Association of Travel Agents (KATA), Kenya Association of Tour Operators (KATO), Kenya Association of Hotelkeepers and Caterers (KAHC).

The visit/tour by the Rwanda H & T delegates was successful as delegates were exposed to Kenyan experience in the following areas: Funding framework/criteria and how private sector is involved in improving curriculum responsiveness to market needs, Functioning of sector skills councils or similar councils in Kenya, Improvement of sector standards, including among others, training of industry practitioners, How private sector is involved in improving curriculum responsiveness to market needs, TVET curriculum development & revision process in Kenya, Introduction of dual system & in-company trainer training in companies in Kenya, Introduction of training approach of KUC, Presentation of the KUC demonstration hotel, Involvement of key stakeholders in the planning, coordination and delivery of TVET (GIZ Report, 2019).

The newly established Rwanda Technical and Vocational Education and Training Board (RTB) has taken over part of responsibilities of the Workforce Development Authority (WDA), an institution that was dissolved in an ongoing restructuring in public service. RTB takes responsibilities from WDA including organizing and supervising curriculum implementation in technical schools education in order to improve the quality of education. Other responsibilities are hiring qualified teachers and providing them with required trainings. “The new institution is mandated to achieve the government targets of graduating skilled people who are ready to compete on the world market, hiring competent vocational teachers, following the implementation of the curriculum in schools, but most especially using technology in education,”(KT Press, 2020).

Rwanda TVET Board (RTB) is a government institution established in 2020 by the presidential order No N° 123/01 of 15/10/2020 published in Official Gazette N° 32 bis of 19/10/2020. It was established under the Ministry of Education, to be at the fore-front of all efforts to promote TVET from level one (1) to level (5) of the Rwanda TVET Qualification Framework.

National Examination and School Inspection Authority (NESA) is a government institution established in 2020 by the presidential order No N° 123/01 of 15/10/2020 published in Official Gazette N° 32 bis of 19/10/2020. It was established under the Ministry of Education, to be at the center by monitoring the implementation of Norms and Standards through school inspections and also administrate the comprehensive assessments from level one (1) to level (5) in TVET and Basic Education in line with Competence Based Curriculum / Training. The primary mission of NESA is to ensure quality of education in basic education and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) from level one (1) to five (5) and to regulate the comprehensive assessments of students and national examinations.

Recently a general consensus had developed that Rwanda, as other countries, faces similar challenges, including the liberalization of the market, rapid innovation in technology, and the importance of knowledge to a country's competitive advantage. Against these pressures, many countries are turning to their education and training systems as a part of the solution for dealing with a whole range of social and economic issues. In light of this, and the previous class status of TVET, the Government of Rwanda has undertaken significant steps to strengthen TVET (MINEDUC, 2015).

Developing tourism through education, MINEDUC initiated a partnership with European Union on the "Ubukerarugendo Imbere Project" to improve institutional and managerial capacity of TVET providers in Tourism and Hospitality, enhance quality and relevance of training, promote training in the workplace and provide professional and business support to tourism and hospitality graduates in Rwanda (Mineduc,2021).

Skills development and employment promotion are central to Rwanda's transformative Vision 2050, aiming to secure high standards of living for all Rwandans. To achieve this goal, Rwanda must build a dynamic and capable workforce, meeting the rising demand for high-skilled jobs. Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) has a key role to play on the country's aforementioned agenda as it aims at equipping people with know-how, hands on skills and/ or competences required in particular occupations or more broadly in the labour market for the jobs of today and tomorrow.

High-quality technical and Vocational Education and Training systems that have a strong work-based learning element facilitate young people's transition to work and contribute to reducing unemployment and supporting economic development. TVET is also a powerful means of empowering people to develop their full capabilities, enabling them to seize social and employment opportunities, and increasing the productivity of both workers and enterprises. TVET institutions are major suppliers of workforce who will be in the forefront in dealing directly with sustainable issues as the better education and training is also necessary for decent work and socially sustainable, fair growth.

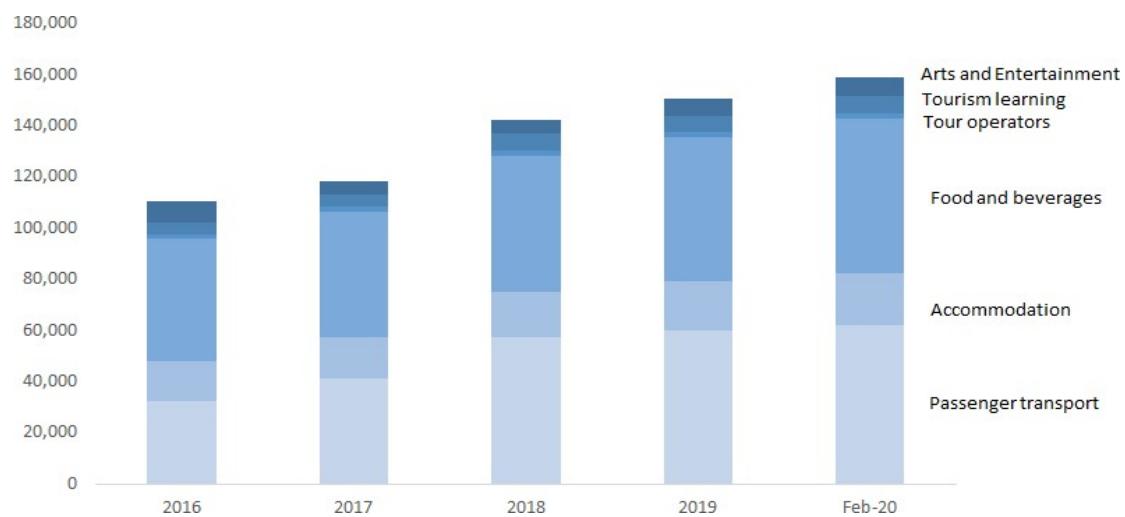
The TVET modernization process has begun with developing a clear picture of the programs focusing on sectors with a high employment potential namely; Construction and building services, Energy, Technical services, Hospitality and Tourism, ICT and Multimedia, Arts and Crafts, Agriculture and Food processing, Transport and logistics, Manufacturing and Mining, Beauty and Aesthetics and aligning TVET policy with national economic development plans.

According to RDB, As part of its "Young Africa Works" Strategy, the Mastercard Foundation is implementing the "Hanga Ahazaza Initiative" in Rwanda. This is a \$ 50 million project, which aims to support 30,000 youth to transition into employment opportunities. Launched in 2018, the 5-year initiative is focused on the tourism and hospitality sector, identified as a high-potential growth area and national development priority for Rwanda, as it moves to middle-income nation status. Hanga Ahazaza, meaning "create the future" in Kinyarwanda, is a consortium of 13 partners from the education, development and private sectors. Key partners worth mentioning are: Education First (EF), GIZ, Dalberg, Cornell University and I&M Bank. The partners operate across the spectrum of skills development and employment promotion, with initiatives including English Training for 2,000 hospitality and tourism staff (EF), Support to TVET Schools in Curriculum review and implementation of Career Guidance (GIZ), Online Learning (Cornell, Vatel) and Access to finance (I&M, GroFin). Since its launch, the program has supported the development and implementation of 9 new courses taught through the TVET school system. The number of people employed in the tourism and hospitality sector has increased steadily over the past 5 years, and was dominated by the food and beverage, transport and accommodation sectors which account for close to 90% of the jobs created, and this trend that has persisted over the years. Skills development is central to realising the economic and job growth potential of the Tourism sector. Driven by Government investments in education, the supply of skills by training institutions in the tourism sector, which includes MICE, has steadily grown with close to 22,000 students graduating in tourism related fields of study across public and private TVET and tertiary institutions in 2018.

According to RDB, over the past decades, the tourism and hospitality sector has emerged as an important driver of growth and employment for the Rwandan economy. In 2019, the sector directly employed slightly over 164,000 people (4% of the labour force) across different education and skill levels. It has also been the biggest employer for women and the youth.

The number of people employed in the tourism and hospitality sector has increased steadily over the past 5 years, and was dominated by the food and beverage, transport and accommodation sectors which account for close to 90% of the jobs created, and this trend that has persisted over the years.

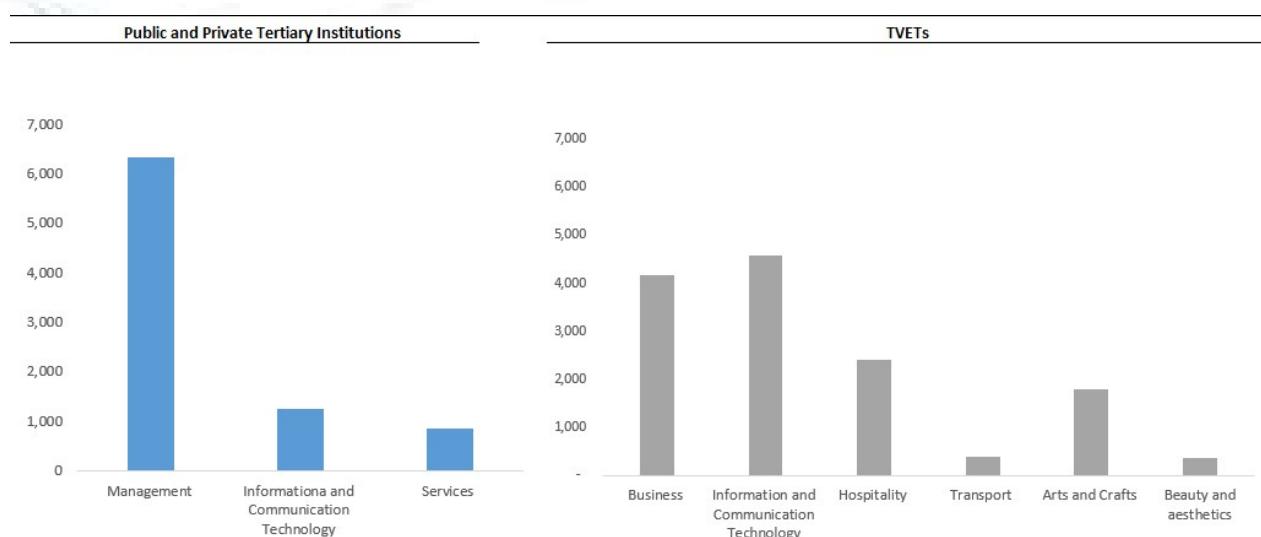
Figure 3. Distribution of employment in different economic activities in tourism sector



Source: Rwanda Labour Force Survey

Skills development is central to realising the economic and job growth potential of the Tourism sector. Driven by Government investments in education, the supply of skills by training institutions in the tourism sector, which includes MICE, has steadily grown with close to 22,000 students graduating in tourism related fields of study across public and private TVET and tertiary institutions in 2018 (see figure below).

Figure 4: Graduates in tourism related courses: public and private tertiary institutions and TVETs



Source: 2018 Rwanda Education statistics (MINEDUC)

According to Private sector federation,2021; More efforts were also invested from different training institutions such as VATEL, DAVIS College, Rwanda Polytechnics(RP), University of Tourism, Technology and Business studies(UTB), Mount Kenya University(MKU), East Africa University of

Rwanda, Muhabura polytechnic college(MPC), Kigali Excellent Tourism and Hospitality Academy(KETHA), Esters Aid,... with their invaluable contribution towards sustainable tourism development, in terms of training people with more practical activities, partnership with private sector to support trainees with internship activities and further leaning activities. Some few institutions like VATEL and Kigali Excellent Tourism and Hospitality Academy (KETHA) initiated a good program of linking graduates with the labor market which is also an added value for employment purpose.

Skills demand, supply and gaps

According to RDB, The tourism and hospitality sector relies heavily on both skilled and unskilled labour. The skills demanded by employers vary by sub-sectors and potential employees must have a mix of technical and interpersonal skills to meet the needs of the clients. Strong communication and interpersonal skills are crucial and cut across all aspects of the tourism and hospitality value chain. Therefore, prospective employees in the tourism sector will be competitive if they can demonstrate skills and competencies required by the employers.

Other skills requirements include tourism marketing and distribution of tourism products skills covering a range of skills such as tours and travel marketing website management /digital marketing, effective communication/feedback management, product distribution, sales skills, tour guiding covering nature interpretation and protection. It also covers communication skills and general knowledge on historical, geographical and cultural tourism, first aid training both basics and advanced, Skills to grade guides, specialized trainings including bird watching, wildlife, communities and agro-tourism, operating and guiding short excursions training modules. Courses offered by training institutions in Rwanda are generally traditional and basic in hotel, cooking, general customer service, restaurant management and hospitality skills. Despite good progress in training skilled personnel for the Tourism Sector in general, the courses offered also do not effectively match the reality of the workplace, which is a result of weak linkages between training Institutions and Industry, insufficient modern equipment and teaching materials. Lack of Competency in speaking and communicating in English language is one of the gaps that graduates of TVET, IPRCs and HLIs face as they join the labour market. To bridge the skill gap in the short term, RDB-Chief Skills Office initiated a partnership with PSF to support capacity development in the Tourism chamber. Tripartite partnership between RDB, MasterCard Foundation and Education First was concluded, with the aim to train 30,000 people in the tourism value chain in English proficiency and customer care skills, focusing on staff that interacts with customers most frequently.

Suggestions & Recommendations:

On the basis of the data and facts explored through the review of literature, the researcher suggests and recommends the following concepts with regards to the course designing and curriculum building in order to promote sustainable tourism: There should be some special courses to be designed especially for the students of Rwanda as the maximum number of students studying in Tourism and Hospitality are from the stated country. As the number of institutions offering courses related to hospitality and tourism increase, it is very important to put into consideration on quality of results considering the needs of the labor market. Putting more efforts in partnership with private sector is an added advantage to bust practical skills of the trainees in the industry. Globally acknowledged and well-accepted topical areas such as Artificial Intelligence, Communication skills, Machine Learning, Social media management and Cyber Security should be included in the curriculum to attract them. The customized courses on Hospitality practices, Health care and customer service may also be proposed. • The combination of Wellness and Information Technology courses may also be one of the attractive options for the foreign students as they will get their respective degrees with the health care certificates.

References

1. Alderman, C.L. (1994). The economics and the role of privately-owned lands used for nature tourism, education and conservation. In M. Munasinghe & J. McNeely (Eds.), *Protected area economics and policy: Linking conservation and sustainable development* (pp. 273-317). Washington DC: World Bank/IUCN.
2. Bliss, J., Monk, M., & Ogborn, J. (1983). Qualitative data analysis for educational research. London: Croom Helm.
3. Alim, M.A., Jee, Teck-W., Voon, M. L., Ngui, K.S., & Kasuma, J. (2021). Tourism development through communities' support: rural communities' perspective. *Geo Journal of Tourism and Geosites*, 39(4), 1473-1482.
4. Alim, M.A., Roy, R., & Hossain, M.E. (2018). Visitors' perception towards tour destinations: A study on Padma garden. *Journal of Business Studies*, 9, 95-109.
5. Andrews, J., & Higson, H. (2008). Graduate employability, 'soft skills' versus 'hard'business knowledge: A European study. *Higher Education in Europe*, 33(4), 411-422. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03797720802522627>
6. Ankomah, P. K., & Larson, R. T. (2004). Education Tourism: A Strategy to Sustainable Tourism Development in Sub-Saharan Africa, Available online: <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/idep/unpan002585.pdf> (accessed on 19 January 2015).
7. Ashwal-Fluss, R., Meyer, M., Pamudurti, N. R., Ivanov, A., Bartok, O., Hanan, M., & Kadener, S. (2014). circRNA biogenesis competes with pre-mRNA splicing. *Molecular Cell*, 56(1), 55-66.
8. Awang-Kipli, D.S.N. (2006). Local agenda 21 initiative in waste minimization in Miri City. *Fourth Sabah Sarawak Environmental Convention*, Malaysia.
9. Barth, M. *Teaching and Learning in Sustainability Science*. In *Sustainability Science*; Springer: Cham, Switzerland, 2016; pp. 325-333.
10. Binsaeed, R. H., Unnisa, S. T., & Rizvi, L. J. (2016). The big impact of soft skills in today's workplace. *Review of Public Administration and Management*, 400(4289), 1-6.
11. Blanke, J. (2007). The travel & tourism competitiveness report 2007: Furthering the process of economic development. *World Economic Forum*.
12. Cañas, J. & Pérez, L. (2014b). Language Strategy in the Hospitality Sector. *Language on the Move*. Consultado en 2015. Retrieved from <http://www.languageonthemove.com/language-tourism/language-strategy-in-the-hospitality-sector>
13. Carlisle, S.; Zaki, K.; Ahmed, M.; Dixey, L.; McLoughlin, E. The Imperative to Address Sustainability Skills Gaps in Tourism in Wales. *Sustainability* 2021, 13, 1161.
14. Cater, E. & Goodall, B. (1992). Must tourism destroy its resource base? In A.M. Mannion & S.R. Bowlby (Eds.), *Environmental issues in the 1990s* (pp. 309-324). Chichester: John Wiley.
15. Cater, E. (1995). Environmental contradictions in sustainable tourism. *The Geographical Journal*, 161(1), 21-28.
16. Dredge, D., Benckendorff, P., Day, M., Gross, M., Walo, M., Weeks, P., & Whitelaw, P. (2012). The philosophic practitioner and the curriculum space. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39(4), 2154-2176. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2012.07.017>

16. Felleisen, M., Findler, R. B., Flatt, M., Krishnamurthi, S., Barzilay, E., McCarthy, J., & Tobin-Hochstadt, S. (2018). A programmable programming language. *Communications of the ACM*, 61(3), 62-71.
17. Fidgeon, P. (2010). Tourism education and curriculum design: A time for consolidation and review? *Tourism Management*, 31(6), 699-723.
18. Fien, J., Maclean, R., & Park, M. (2009). *Work, Learning and Sustainable Development* (1st ed.). Dordrecht: Springer.
19. Filion, F.L., Foley, J.P., & Jacquemot, A.J. (1994). The economics of global ecotourism. In M. Munasinghe & J. McNeely (Eds.), *Protected area economics and policy: Linking conservation and sustainable development* (pp. 235-252). Washington, DC: World Bank/IUCN.
20. François-Lecompte, A., & Prim-Allaz, I. (2011). French people and sustainable tourism: A Study study of their presentations. *Décisions Marketing*, 64, 47-58.
21. G. (2014). El alemán frente a la "anglobalización": plurilingüismo y diversificación cultural como estrategia educativa para el desarrollo de la competitividad empresarial e individual en España. *Revista Nebrija de Lingüística Aplicada* (2014) 16. Consultado en 2015. Retrieved from http://www.nebrija.com/revista-linguistica/files/articulosPDF/articulo_52f66ed865307.pdf
22. Goby, V. P. (2007). Business communication needs: A multicultural perspective. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, 21(4), 425–437. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1050651907304029>
23. Goldney, D., Murphy, T., Fien, J., & Kent, J. (2007). Finding the Common Ground: Is There a Place for Sustainability Education in VET? A National Vocational Education and Training Research and Evaluation Program Report. Adelaide: NCVER. Retrieved January 26, 2017 from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED499704.pdf>
24. Goyal, M. M. (2014). Educational Tourism: Analysing the Global Trends. *Asia Pacific Journal of Research*.1(21).
25. Hagen, S. (2006). ELAN: Effects on the European Economy of Shortages of Foreign Language Skills in Enterprise. London: A Report prepared by CILT, the National Centre for Languages, for the European Commission. Consultado en 2013. Retrieved from http://ec.europa.eu/languages/policy/strategic-framework/documents/elan_en.pdf
26. Halfhill, T. R., & Nielsen, T. M. (2007). Quantifying the “softer side” of management education: An example using teamwork competencies. *Journal of Management Education*, 31(1), 64–80.
27. Ham, S.H., Sutherland, D.S., & Meganck, R.A. (1991). Taking environmental interpretation to protected areas in developing countries: Problems in exporting a US model. Mimeograph. Idaho, University of Idaho: College of Forestry, Wildlife and Range Sciences.
28. Heller, M. (2005). Language, Skill and Authenticity in the Globalised New Economy. *Revista de Sociolingüística*. Consultado en 2015. Retrieved from http://www6.gencat.net//lengcat/noves/hm05hivern/heller_1_2.htm
29. Jaber, H. M., & Marzuki, A. (2019). Improving Awareness of Tourism Education among Students' in Intermediate and Secondary Schools in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Experts' Social Studies Curricula Point of View. *International Transaction Journal of Engineering, Management, & Applied Sciences & Technologies*, 10(3), 351-359.

30. Jameson, D. A. (2007). Embedding written and oral communication within the hospitality curriculum. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Education*, 19(1), 39–50. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10963758.2007.10696881>

31. Jee, Teck-W., Ting, Hui-B., & Alim, M.A. (2019). Community based tourism re-visit intention: Tourists' perspective. *International Journal of Business and Society*, 20(2), 585-604.

32. Jeronen, E. Education for Sustainable Development. In *Encyclopedia of Sustainable Management*; Springer: Cham, Switzerland, 2022.

33. Johnson, R. (1998). Putting the eco into tourism. *Asia Magazine*, 36(13), 8-12. Jensen, B.B. & Schnack, K. (1997). The action competence approach in environmental education. *Environmental Education Research*, 3(2), 163-178.

34. Kagan, C.; Burton, M.H. Putting the 'Social' into Sustainability Science. In *Handbook of Sustainability Science and Research*; World Sustainability Series; Springer: Cham, Switzerland, 2018; pp. 285–298.

35. Kim, A.K.; Davies, J. A Teacher's Perspective on Student Centred Learning: Towards the Development of Best Practice in an Undergraduate Tourism Course. *J. Hosp. Leis. Sport Tour. Educ.* 2014, 14, 6–14.

36. Lim, Y. M., Lee, T. H., Yap, C. S., & Ling, C. C. (2016). Employability skills, personal qualities, and early employment problems of entry-level auditors: Perspectives from employers, lecturers, auditors, and students. *Journal of Education for Business*, 91(4), 185–192. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08832323.2016.1153998>

37. Lolli, J. (2013a). Perceptions of the importance and preparedness of interpersonal communication skills of the entry-level hospitality leader: Implications for hospitality educators. *Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism*, 13(4), 354–373. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15313220.2013.839302>

38. Lolli, J. C. (2013b). Interpersonal communication skills and the young hospitality leader: Are they prepared? *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 32, 295–298. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2012.02.010>

39. Machemer, P.L.; Crawford, P. Student Perceptions of Active Learning in a Large Cross-disciplinary Classroom. *Act. Learn. High. Educ.* 2007, 8, 9–30.

40. Maclean, R & Wilson, D (2009). Introduction. In Maclean and Wilson (ed.). *International handbook of education for the changing world of work (1xxiii-cxii)*. Dordrecht: Springer.

41. MINEDUC. (2015). Rwanda TVET Policy. Kigali: Ministry of Education.

42. Moscardo, G. Sustainability Education for Tourists. In *Education for Sustainability in Tourism; CSR, Sustainability, Ethics & Governance*; Springer: Berlin/Heidelberg, Germany, 2015; pp. 171–184.

43. Nagatsu, M.; Davis, T.; DesRoches, C.T.; Koskinen, I.; MacLeod, M.; Stojanovic, M.; Thorén, H. Philosophy of Science for Sustainability Science. *Sustain. Sci.* 2020, 15, 1807–1817.

44. National Policy on Workplace Learning to Prepare Rwandan Youth for Employment (Workplace Learning Policy), 2015

45. Nikolich, M. A., & Sparks, B. A. (1995). The hospitality service encounter: The role of communication. *Hospitality Research Journal*, 19(2), 43–56. <https://doi.org/10.1177/109634809501900205>

46. OECD (2016c). *OECD Tourism Trends and Policies 2016*. OECD Publishing, Paris. Retrieved March 9, 2017 from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/tour-2016-en>

47. Paksoy, M., Soyer, F., & Çalık, F. (2017). The impact of managerial communication skills on the levels of job satisfaction and job commitment. *Journal of Human Sciences*, 14(1), 642–652. <https://doi.org/10.14687/jhs.v14i1.4259>

48. Piller, I. (2012). Money Talks. Language on the Move. Consultado en 2014. Retrieved from <http://www.languageonthemove.com/language-consumerism/money-talks>

49. Plant, K., & Slippers, J. (2015). Improving the business communication skills of postgraduate internal audit students: A South African teaching innovation. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*, 52(3), 310–321. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14703297.2013.852480>

50. Quezada, R. L. (2004). Beyond educational tourism:Lessons learned while student teaching abroad. *International Education Journal*, 5(4), pp 458-465.

51. Reisinger, Y., & Dimanche, F. (2010). *International Tourism*. Routledge.

52. Ritchie, J. B., & Hudson, S. (2009). Understanding and meeting the challenges of consumer/tourist experience research. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 11(2), 111-126.

53. Robles, M. M. (2012). Executive perceptions of the top 10 soft skills needed in today's workplace. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 75(4), 453–465. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1080569912460400>

54. Robles, M. M. (2012). Executive perceptions of the top 10 soft skills needed in today's workplace. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 75(4), 453–465. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1080569912460400>

55. Roy, S. C., & Roy, M. (2015). Tourism in Bangladesh: Present status and future prospects. *International Journal of Management Science and Business Administration*, 1(8), 53-61.

56. Rukundo, D., 2021; Contribution of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) program in promoting employment opportunities among the youth in Rwanda

57. Sandip, S. (2014). Competitive marketing Strategies for Tourism Industry in the Light of “Vision 2021” of Bangladesh. *European Journal of Business and Management*, 4(4), 210-220.

58. Shuayto, N. (2013). Management skills desired by business school deans and employers: An empirical investigation. *Business Education & Accreditation*, 5(2), 93–105.

59. Swarbrooke, J. (1999). *Sustainable Tourism Management*. Cabi.

60. The World Bank report, 2011: Skills Development Project

61. Tilbury, D. *Education for Sustainable Development: An Expert Review of Processes and Learning*; UNESCO: Paris, France, 2011.

62. Tuhin, M.R., Ali, M.B., Nuruzzaman, M., Alim, M.A., Sakib, M.S., & Sarker, M.O.F. (2020). Can customer satisfaction be gained through brand image and perceived value? *Jahangirnagar University Journal of Marketing*, 8, 95-109.

63. Tyrrell, T. J., & Johnston, R. J. (2012). The rocket science of sustainable tourism. *Tourism Analysis*, 17(3), 371-376.

64. UN. *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*; United Nations: New York, NY, USA, 2015. 10.

65. UNESCO (1999). Lifelong learning and training: a bridge to the future—final report. Paris: UNESCO. (Final report of the second International Congress on TVET, Seoul, 1999). Retrieved February 17, 2017 from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/001169/116954e.pdf>

66. UNESCO (2000). The Dakar Framework for Action. Education for All: Meeting our Collective Commitments. Dakar: UNESCO retrieved February 11, 2017 from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001211/121147e.pdf>

67. UNESCO (2001). Technical and Vocational Education and Training: A Vision for the Twenty-first Century, UNESCO Recommendations. Seoul: UNESCO. Retrieved January 31, 2017 from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/001160/116096E.pdf>

68. UNESCO (2012a). Education for Sustainable Development. Sourcebook. Education for Sustainable Development in Action. Learning & Training tools N°4 – 2012. Paris: UNESCO. Retrieved February 3, 2017 from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002163/216383e.pdf>

69. UNESCO-UNEP. (1977). The Tbilisi Declaration. Connect, 3(1), 1-8. Winter, R. (1982). Dilemma analysis: a contribution to methodology for action research. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 12(3), 161-174.

70. UNESCO-UNEVOC (2004). The Bonn Declaration. Retrieved February 5, 2017 from http://www.unevoc.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/pubs/SD_BonnDeclaration_e.pdf

71. Wals, A. E., & Jickling, B. (2002). “Sustainability” in higher education: From doublethink and newspeak to critical thinking and meaningful learning. *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education*, 3(3), 221-232.

72. Wang, D., Li, X. R., & Li, Y. (2013). China's “smart tourism destination” initiative: A taste of the service-dominant logic. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 2(2), 59-61.

73. Wang, J., Ayres, H., & Huyton, J. (2009). Job ready graduates: A tourism industry perspective. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 16(1), 62–72. <https://doi.org/10.1375/jhtm.16.1.62>

74. Wesley, S. C., Jackson, V. P., & Lee, M. (2017). The perceived importance of core soft skills between retailing and tourism management students, faculty and businesses. *Employee Relations*, 39(1), 79–99. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ER-03-2016-0051>

75. World Commission on Environment and Development, *Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future*. UN Documents: Gathering a Body of Global Agreements. (1987).

76. Zehrer, A., & Mössenlechner, C. (2009). Key competencies of tourism graduates: The employers' point of view. *Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism*, 9(3-4), 266–287. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15313220903445215>